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BOROUGH OF HALESOWEN.

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

and the

CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR

for

1941.

Council House,
Halesowen.
21st. September, 1942.

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Halesowen.

Mrs. Harrison and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my report on the health of the Borough of Halesowen for the year 1941.

There are more notifications of infectious diseases than usual, this is due mainly to the fact that this is the first complete year that Measles and Whooping cough are compulsorily notifiable, and it is made more noticeable by the fact that for a number of years we have been very fortunate in having a very low infectious disease rate.

In my opinion the general health of the district has been satisfactory. The number of births exceeds the deaths by 173.

Miss. M. I. Duggan joined the Department in February and has been a great help to me.

I would like to express my thanks to the Chairman and members of the Public Health Committee, and also Mr. Lea and the members of his staff for their willing help and co-operation at all times.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

RICHARD L. CORLETT.

Medical Officer of Health.

MEMBERS of the Council of the Borough of Halesowen,

Mayor:

Councillor W. Hodgetts.

Deputy Mayor:

Alderman H. J. Cox, J.P.

There were two changes in the membership of the Council from the full list shown in 1938.

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT STAFF.

Medical Officer of Health:

R. L. Corlett, M. D., D. P. H.

Chief Sanitary Inspector; Cleansing Superintendent: Inspector under the Shops and Petroleum Acts.

Ernest Lea, M.S.I.A., A.M.I.P.C.
(Certified Meat and Foods Inspector)

Senior Additional Sanitary Inspector:

L. J. Hill, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.
(Certified Meat and Foods Inspector:
Certified Smoke Inspector:
Certificate of Sanitary Science)

Additional Sanitary Inspectors:

E. W. Burrows, Cert. S.I.B.
On military service.

S. Maher, M.S.I.A.
(from 17/3/41 to 31/7/41)

Clerical Staff:

F. D. Hipkiss. (On military service).
A. R. Humphries.
Miss. L. S. Goode.
Miss. M. I. Duggan (Appointed January 1941).

STATISTICAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

The area of the Borough remains 5,247 acres. The population estimated to the middle of 1941 was 770 more than the corresponding estimate last year. No other information will be given here in accordance with official requests.

PHYSICAL FEATURES AND GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE DISTRICT.

The previous comments on this subject need no further explanation this year, nor in the interest of National Security will any be given.

VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR.

BIRTHS.

(a) Live Births.

	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate ...	316	266	582
Illegitimate .	8	4	12
	324	270	594

Birth Rate per 1,000 e.r.p. 13.2
Birth Rate for England and Wales 14.2

(b)

Still Births.

	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate ...	7	5	12
Illegitimate .	1	-	1
	8	5	13

Rate per 1,000 births (live and still) 16.2

DEATHS.

Males	219
Females	202
	421

Crude Death Rate per 1,000 e.r.p.	11.3
Death Rate for England and Wales	12.9

Deaths from Puerperal Causes.

One death from puerperal and post-abortive shock occurred and one from other maternal causes. Though not so gratifying as last year, when no such deaths occurred, this incidence of death is maintained satisfactorily low.

Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age.

	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	25	19	44
Illegitimate	-	-	-
	25	19	44

All infants per 1,000 live births	72.48
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	74.07

Deaths from Measles (all ages)	Nil.
Deaths from Whooping Cough	1 male and 1 female.
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	1 male and 2 females.

CAUSES OF DEATH.

		Male	Female
1.	Typhoid and Paratyphoid fevers	-	-
2.	Cerebro-spinal fever	2	1
3.	Scarlet Fever	-	-
4.	Whooping Cough	1	1
5.	Diphtheria	1	-
6.	Tuberculosis of the respiratory system ...	10	9
7.	Other forms of Tuberculosis	1	1
8.	Syphilitic diseases	-	2
9.	Influenza	5	3
10.	Measles	-	-
11.	Acute poliomyelitis and polioencephalitis	-	-
12.	Acute infectious encephalitis	-	-
13.	(Cancer of buccal cavity and oesophagus (men)	1	-
	(Cancer of uterus (women only)	-	4
14.	Cancer of stomach and duodenum	9	3
15.	Cancer of the breast	1	9
16.	Cancer of all other sites	26	20
17.	Diabetes	2	5
18.	Intra-cranial vascular lesions	13	13
19.	Heart Disease	43	49
20.	Other diseases of the circulatory system .	7	-
21.	Bronchitis	23	17
22.	Pneumonia.	15	13
23.	Other respiratory diseases	1	-
24.	Ulceration of stomach or duodenum	2	-
25.	Diarrhœa (under 2 years of age)	1	2
26.	Appendicitis	-	-
27.	Other digestive diseases	5	9
28.	Nephritis	6	5
29.	Puerperal and post-abortive sepsis	-	1
30.	Other maternal causes	-	1
31.	Premature birth	7	2
32.	Congenital malformations birth injury and infantile disease	8	4
33.	Suicide	1	4
34.	Road traffic accidents	2	3
35.	Other violent causes	7	3
36.	All other causes	19	18
		219	202

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE BOROUGH.

The public health services generally remained as in my last pre-war report. They were quite satisfactory.

Maternity and Child Welfare is under the direction of the County Council.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

No outstanding circumstances merit attention in this third abbreviated report.

Schools.

The general conditions of schools in the Borough are quite satisfactory.

HOUSING.

Particulars of work carried out in respect of Housing:

1. Inspection of dwelling houses during the year:-

(1)	(a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under the Public Health or Housing Acts)	90
	(b) Number of inspections made for that purpose	90
(2)	(a) Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations 1935 and 1932	3
	(b) Number of inspections made for that purpose	9
(3)	Number of dwelling houses found in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	3
(4)	Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not in all respects to be reasonably fit for human habitation	70

2. Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notices.-
Number of defective houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers 10

3. Action under Statutory Powers during the year:-
A - Proceedings under section 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.
No action during the year.

B - Proceedings under Public Health Acts:

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied 3

(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:

(a) By owners 9
By local authority in default of owners . ... Nil.
(Including items outstanding from 1940).

C - Proceedings under sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made 3

(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders .. .. Nil.

D - Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936.

(1) Number of seperate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made ... ... Nil.

(2) Number of seperate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit ... ... Nil.

4. HOUSING ACT, 1936, Part 4 - OVERCROWDING.

It was impossible to take any action under this part of the act during 1941, indeed, with the influx of evacuees from many parts the problem of overcrowding tended to worsen.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

A. Milk Supply.

The milk supply was satisfactory throughout the year.

B. Meat and Other Foods.

Inspections of foods was carried out only when occasion required. The marjority of foods condemned were tinned goods.

Sections C.D.E. and F. have not been the subject of any conditions worthy of note in this report.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Smallpox.

No case occured during the year.

Diphtheria.

37 cases of this disease were notified with one death. 21 of these children were under 15 years, and 16 among persons over 15. Only one of these cases had been immunised.

During 1941, 3,094 children were immunised, (691 children under school age, and 2,403 school children). The material used was A.P.T. supplied by the Ministry of Health. Two injections were given at monthly intervals, except in the cases of children over 12 years of age who were given three small injections. From 1935, until the end of 1940, 2,461 children had been immunised free under the Borough scheme, (3 injections of T.A.M.).

Schick Testing.

A number of children who had been immunised several years ago were tested to see whether they required further treatment. Though the number tested was small, the results are not without interest.

Total Immunised By:-		Total No. Schick Negative.	Total % Schick Negative.	Average period since immunisation.
(1 injection only 1 c.c. A.P.T. -	21.	10.	47.62%	5.05 years.
(3 injections) T.A.M. -	48.	42.	87.5%	5.89 years.

To Dr. Wyndham Parker, our County Medical Officer, who kindly placed the Clinics and First Aid Posts at our disposal for immunisation at the outbreak of War, I express my sincere thanks. I should like also to express my thanks to Dr. Eileen Bulmer for her propaganda work, especially at the three Infant Welfare Centres, to the County Nurses, Miss Robson and Miss O'Grady and Miss Marshall Meade, to the lady volunteers at the First Aid Posts who also assisted, to the Head Teachers for their full co-operation, and to Miss M. Duggan.

Scarlet Fever.

110 cases of scarlet fever were reported during 1941, of which 49 were isolated in hospital; there were no deaths. The marjority were of a mild type.

Erysipelas.

14 cases occurred during the year, a decrease of 3 on the preceeding year.

Pneumonia.

54 cases of pneumonia of all forms were reported during the year, and 24 deaths were reported.

Puerperal Pyrexia.

Five cases of this condition were reported to the County Medical Officer, the number being one less than that of 1940.

Paratyphoid.

16 cases were notified as Paratyphoid B. A minor outbreak of this disease occured and was the subject of exhaustive enquiries on our part, visits to patients and shops and consultations with the County Analyst. A close liaison was maintained with adjacent authorities. Our enquiries led to definite suspicion, and this would appear to have been confirmed by the efforts of an adjacent council whose enquiries proceeded in concert with ours. Following action by the adjacent authority resulted in the cessation of further incidence of this disease and generally results were satisfactory. No deaths were recorded. Clinically the cases were fairly typical. One child aroused the suspicion of meningitis because of very marked photophobia and a certain amount of stiffness. Sometimes photophobia does occur in children with paratyphoid. It passed off with the appearance of the "rose" spots on the back. It is of interest to note that two of the notified cases had no discoverable symptoms and appeared to be in good health. The diagnosis was made on bacteriological grounds. The examination was made because from information available it appeared possible that they might have contracted the germ, and their occupations rendered it highly advisable that we should be certain on this point. The local medical practitioners rendered very great assistance by their willing co-operation. There were no secondry cases.

Cerebro-Spinal Fever. (Spotted Fever.

7 cases of this disease were reported; 3 deaths were recorded.

Food Poisoning.

No case notified.

Tuberculosis.

46 cases were registered during the year of which 37 were pulmonary. Of the total of 46 cases, 1 was re-registered after removing back to this area, and 4 were heard of otherwise than by notification. Two were transferred from other authorities.

19 deaths from pulmonary tuberculosis were recorded and 2 deaths from non-pulmonary tuberculosis.

Council House,
Halesowen.

21st September, 1942.

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Halesowen.

Lady and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in submitting my eleventh annual report of the work of my department for the year 1941.

Many of the difficulties met with in 1940 arose again and naturally, new problems presented themselves during the year, but none was so formidable that a solution, or partial solution was not possible.

Generally the work of the department was carried on smoothly during 1941 though I had hoped for a longer spell of assistance from Mr. Maher who was with us for 4 months.

I have again to record my thanks to the Chairman and members of the Public Health Committee, and to the members of the staff for their continued support during the year.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

ERNEST LEA.

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

Housing.

The procedure recommended by the Ministry was maintained, with regard to the making of demolition orders during the year.

Three houses were found to be in such a state that action under Section 11 Housing Act, 1936 was necessary, and these three were subsequently the subject of demolition orders.

It is doubtful if this procedure is of much practical value under the present conditions. Demolition, for various reasons, cannot take place; it is not possible to build more houses, and therefore the re-housing of the tenants is a well-nigh impossible problem. I am of the opinion that a system of restricted repairs, designed to carry on the houses, until the cessation of war, would be more advantageous to the three main interested bodies, landlord, tenant and local authority.

Infectious Diseases.

1941 was an outstanding year for notifications, principally because the new order requiring the notification of measles and whooping cough had its first full years' run.

1,040 notifications of all types were received, the highest number ever recorded in the Borough. An important item was the notification of 16 cases of paratyphoid. The Medical Officer of Health has reported on this outbreak in his portion of the report and I have only to add that the investigations took up a large part of our time but led us to a successful conclusion.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

(a) Milk.

The general supply of milk in the district continued satisfactorily, samples taken during the year showed no cause for dissatisfaction.

(b) Meat and Other Foods.

The meat supply continued satisfactorily; no matter arose requiring attention.

Petroleum Acts.

There were 86 licences in force at the end of 1941 for the storage of 254,167 gallons of petroleum spirit, and 4 licences authorising the keeping of 141,752 lbs. of carbide of calcium.

Public Cleansing.

The department carried on during 1941, making the best efforts under the general difficult circumstances.

Following on my remarks of last year, further efforts were made in 1941 the results of which will be seen in the report for 1942. One other "major" item took place during the year which is worthy of note; it was found impossible to maintain the normal weekly collection of refuse and in accordance with the general practice the collection was slowed down to once every fortnight. This resulted in the much more efficient collection of salvage and had a very beneficial result on the working of the department.

I have again to record with pleasure my keen appreciation of the co-operation and help afforded by the Womens' Voluntary Service, School teachers and children and other voluntary bodies. In the various "drives" held during the year very real help was given to us by these volunteers and I am grateful for their assistance.

The campaign to collect and process kitchen waste was, perhaps, the biggest item added to the department's duties during 1941 and was the cause of frequent discussions and experiments. I am happy to be able to record however, that after the usual "birth pangs" the scheme was operating successfully at the end of the year.

The essentials of costs are given for the year, and the slight increase is due, as is obvious, to the increase in wages and prices generally.

Public Cleansing Costs, 1941.

Collection.

Gross expenditure	4,771	17	3
Gross Income	1	5	6
Nett expenditure	4,770	11	9
Nett cost per ton		10	4.3
Nett cost per 1,000 houses	439	5	7.2
Nett cost per 1,000 persons	128	0	0

Disposal.

Including Salvage.

Gross expenditure	1,517	10	7
Gross Income	1,470	6	6
Nett expenditure	47	4	1
Nett cost per ton			1.2
Nett cost per 1,000 houses	4	6	11.1
Nett cost per 1,000 persons	1	5	3.7

Total Costs.

Gross expenditure	6,289	7	10
Gross Income	1,471	12	0
Nett Expenditure	4,817	15	10
Nett cost per ton		10	5.5.
Nett cost per 1,000 houses	443	12	6.3
Nett cost per 1,000 persons	129	5	3.7

Other Inspections.

With the temporary assistance of Mr. Maher it was possible to get in more routine visits of an essential character in 1941, but generally it was not possible to visit all the places necessary with the regularity of peacetime routine, indeed, such visits were only undertaken at intervals when the more serious work allowed.

Mortuaries.

The mortuaries were not used during the year.

Billeting.

Billeting went on during 1941 as required. Large numbers of industrial workers were drafted in throughout the year, this making accommodation more difficult to obtain than before.

NUMERICAL SUMMARY FOR 1941.

Infectious Disease.

Number of houses and schools disinfected after notifiable disease	131
Lots of bedding, clothing, etc., disinfected	112

Houses.

Houses inspected: General inspections	90
Houses recorded under Housing Regulations	3
Number recorded as unfit for human habitation	3
Number of houses demolished	Nil
Number of notices issued under Section 9	Nil
Dirty houses dealt with	9
Yards paved or re-paved	4
Cases of overcrowding abated	Nil

House Drainage.

Number laid or relaid, trapped, ventilated or repaired	21
Number of obstructed drains dealt with	160
Number of house drains tested	2
Number of insanitary W. Cs. sinks and urinals rectified	7

Waterclosets.

Number of slop closets converted into W.Cs. with a fresh water flush 4
Number of defective W.Cs. remedied 7

Offensive Trades.

Number under observation 1
Number improperly conducted . ... Nil

Milk and Dairies.

Number of dairies registered in the area 35
Total number of retailers in the district 121
Number of licences under Milk (Special Designations) Order 11
Approximate number of milking cows in the district ..216

Lodging Houses.

Number on register 1
Number of inspections 1

Rats and Mice (Destruction) Act.

Cases dealt with 3

Nuisances arising from Domestic Animals.

Number of cases of removal after inspection 10

Factories and Workshops.

Factories inspected 17
Workshops inspected 4
Nuisances observed 5
Nuisances remedied (including outstanding from 1940 . 6

NUMBER AND NATURE OF INSPECTIONS MADE BY
THE SANITARY INSPECTORS DURING
1941.

NATURE.	PRIMARY VISITS.	RE-VISITS.
Infectious Disease Prevention	134	6
Houses (Housing Act, 1936)	8	5
Ashpits	2	2
Dustbins	8	4
Drains	16	7
Food Inspections	143	-
Offensive Trades	2	-
Factory and Workshops	12	9
Food Premises	6	-
Houses	90	83
Bakehouses	5	2
Dairies and Cowsheds	6	-
Petroleum Stores.	6	1
Keeping of Animals	6	4
Verminous Houses	7	7
Miscellaneous	142	-
Refuse Disposal Tips	14	-
Shops Act	2	-
Interviews	34	-
Houses (Housing Act, 1936) Measurements of Overcrowding	1	-
Schools	8	-
Markets and Fairs	1	-
Milk Sampling	3	-
Other Sampling	5	-
A.R.P. and Mortuaries	54	-
Billeting	114	-
Air Raid Shelters	7	-
Military Headquarters	7	-
War Damage	6	-
Interviews with N.F.S.	3	-
Canteens	1	-
Infestations	3	-
Food Waste...	1	-
Police Court	1	-
Police	4	-
Salvage	2113	
	2975	130